

Appendix E. Example Scoping Letter, Distribution List, and Comment Responses



DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS - MONTANA

P.O. Box 4789, 1956 Mt Majo Street
Fort Harrison, Montana 59636-4789

August 6, 2021

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination of Environmental Planning in Support of an Environmental Assessment of the Montana Army National Guard's Proposed Billings Limited Army Aviation Support Facility

Airport Administration
Billings Logan International Airport
1901 Terminal Circle
Billings, MT 59105

Dear Sir or Madam:

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and Montana Army National Guard (MTARNG) are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to identify the environmental impacts associated with the use and operation of the proposed Billings Limited Army Aviation Support Facility (LAASF). The proposed facility would be located at a privately owned hangar adjacent to the Billings Logan International Airport at 2121 Hangar Drive, Billings, Yellowstone County, Montana (see Figure 1 in Enclosure 1). The LAASF would alleviate the limited aviation assets available in eastern Montana, northern Wyoming, and western North and South Dakota and would allow MTARNG's ability to train soldiers more fully.

Generally, this action would include the leasing of the hangar and the operation and light maintenance of up to six helicopters. The action does not include construction of new facilities or modification of existing facilities. Two temporary mobile office units would be located on site to accommodate administrative and training activities. The facility would be fenced. Existing utilities and septic system would be used. Refueling would be done on-site, using a 5,000-gallon over-the-road tanker and a heavy expanded mobility tactical truck (HEMTT).

The Billings LAASF would be supported by up to 14 full-time employees. Drill weekends would occur once a month, and up to 60 personnel would attend. Parking would be onsite in the vicinity of the hangar. Personnel who travel for drill weekends would lodge and dine in the Billings area. Training would take place on Friday evenings and all-day Saturday and Sunday. Transitional movements (arrival/departure) would occur at the hangar, and flights would occur within established airport traffic pattern areas or away from Billings airspace.

As this Proposed Action is federally funded, we are preparing an EA that will evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the Proposed Action, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] §4321 *et seq.*); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1600-1508); and Environmental Analysis of Army Actions; Final Rule, 29 March 2002 (32 CFR Part 651); as well as the Army National Guard NEPA Handbook – *Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NGB, October 2011).

Information Request: While MTARNG maintains a wealth of current environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic data associated with the project location and vicinity, we are seeking your input on any specific environmental issues or concerns your agency may have. *Information your agency can provide on any of the following environmental issues (at or in the vicinity of the Proposed Action) would be appreciated:*

- Potential environmental concerns or issues;
- Surface- and ground-water resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, open water features, wells, and local aquifers;
- Federal- or state-listed threatened or endangered species, or any species proposed for such listing or critical habitat for such species that may occur within a one-mile radius around the proposed LAASF site;
- Parks, nature preserves, conservation areas, designated wild or scenic rivers, migratory bird habitats, or special wildlife issues;
- Natural resource issues;
- Cultural resources issues and/or Native American concerns;
- Pertinent soils and geologic data;
- Traffic, noise, or socioeconomic concerns;
- Land use or public health and safety concerns;
- Air quality concerns; and/or
- Additional environment concerns or issues.

Data you make available will provide valuable and necessary input into the NEPA analytical process. As part of the NEPA process, local citizens, groups, and agencies, among others, will have ample future opportunity to review and comment on the information and alternatives addressed in the document.

Other Agencies and Organizations: A list of contacts to whom this request was sent is provided in Enclosure 2. *Should you know of any additional parties that may have data or concerns relevant to this Proposed Action, please forward them a copy of this letter, include their information in your response, or contact us directly with this information.*

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this analysis. **Please respond on or before September 7, 2021**, to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. If you are not interested in this project and do not wish receive follow-up notices, please notify us by mail or e-mail, and we will remove you from our project mailing list.

Please send your written response via regular mail or e-mail (preferred) to:

Montana Army National Guard
JFHQ-MT
Attn: Environmental Office
1956 Mt. Majo Street, P.O. Box 4789
Fort Harrison, MT 59636-4789
rebekah.l.myers2.nfg@mail.mil

POC for this action is Rebekah Myers at 406-324-3087. Thank you in advance for your participation in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Peter Hronek', written over a faint, stylized outline of a mountain range.

J. PETER HRONEK
Major General, Montana National Guard
The Adjutant General

Enclosures

Enclosure 1
Project Location



Figure 1. Project Location

Enclosure 2

List of Parties Contacted

Federal Agencies

Mr. Joe Nye
Federal Aviation Administration
Helena FSDO
2725 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 89602-1213

Ms. Jodi Bush, Field Supervisor
Ecological Services, Helena Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
585 Shepard Way, Suite 1
Helena, MT 59601

Montana Operations Region 8
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
10 West 15th Street, Suite 3200
Helena, MT 59626

Tribes

Mr. Timothy Davis, Chairman
Blackfeet Nation Tribe
P.O. Box 850
All Chiefs Square
Browning, MT 59417

Mr. Floyd Azure, Chairman
Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes
P.O. Box 1027
501 Medicine Bear Road
Poplar, MT 59255

Ms. Shelly Fyant, Chairwoman
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
P.O. Box 278
42487 Complex Boulevard
Pablo, MT 59855

Mr. Frank Whiteclay, Chairman
The Crow Tribe of Indians
P.O. Box 19
Bacheeitch Avenue
Crow Agency, MT 59022

Mr. Andrew Werk Jr., President
Fort Belknap Indian Community
656 Agency Main Street
Harlem, MT 59526

Mr. Harlan Baker, Chairman
Chippewa Cree Tribe
P.O. Box 544
Box Elder, MT 59521

Ms. Donna Fisher, President
Northern Cheyenne Tribe
P.O. Box 128
600 Cheyenne Avenue
Lame Deer, MT 59043

Mr. Devon Boyer, Chairman
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall
Reservation
P.O. Box 306
Fort Hall, ID 83203

Mr. Thor Hoyte, Attorney
Crow Tribe of Indians
6405 Hawks Prairie Road NE
Olympia, WA 98516

Mr. Gerald Gray, Chairman
Little Shell Chippewa Tribe
625 Central Avenue West
Great Falls, MT 59401

Mr. Bobby Komardley, Chairman
Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1330
Anadarko, OK 73005

State Agencies

Mr. John Tubbs
Montana Department of Natural Resources and
Conservation (DNRC)
1625 11th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Ms. Sierra Farmer
Montana DNRC
1625 11th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Mr. Chris Dorrington
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Ms. Sierra Farmer
Montana DNRC
1625 11th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Mr. Henry Worsch
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Ms. Jen Lane
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Mr. Malcom Long
Montana Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 211001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Ms. Linnaea Schroeder
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Mr. Peter Brown
Montana State Historic Preservation Office
1301 East Lockett Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

Mr. Tom Gocksch
Montana Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 211001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Local Agencies

Mr. Bill Cole, Mayor
City of Billings
210 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Mr. Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
City of Billings
210 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

City Council
City of Billings
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103

Mr. John Ostlund
Yellowstone County Commissioner
P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107

Mr. Donald Jones
Yellowstone County Commissioner
P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107

Mr. Denis Pitman
Yellowstone County Commissioner
P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107

Airport Administration
Billings Logan International Airport
1901 Terminal Circle
Billings, MT 59105

Big Sky Search and Rescue
P.O. Box 160063
Big Sky, MT 59716

Local Agencies (continued)

Stillwater County Search and Rescue
P.O. Box 729
Columbus MT 59019

Chief Pepper Valdez
Billings Fire Department
210 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Mr. Mike Linder
Yellowstone County Sheriff
2323 2nd Ave North
Billings, MT 59101

Mr. Lawrence C. Big Hair
Bighorn County Sheriff
121 3rd Street West
Hardin, MT 59034

Mr. Josh McQuillan
Carbon County Sheriff
102 Broadway Avenue North
Red Lodge, MT 59068

Mr. Wayne Robinson
Treasure County Sheriff
307 Rapelje Avenue
Hysham, MT 59038

Carbon County Search and Rescue
235 Upper Red Lodge Creek Road
Red Lodge, MT 59068

Mr. Rich St. John
Billings Police Department
220 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Mr. Shawn Lesnik
Musselshell County Sheriff
820 Main Street
Roundup, MT 59072

Mr. Charles Kem
Stillwater County Sheriff
400 East 3rd Avenue North
Columbus, MT 59109

Mr. Robert Pallas
Golden Valley Sheriff
107 Kemp Street
Ryegate, MT 59074

Captain Philip Schmidt
Civil Air Patrol
P.O. Box 1887
Great Falls, MT 59403

From: [St. John, Rich](#)
To: [Myers, Rebekah L NFG NG MTARNG \(USA\)](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Billings LAASF
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:39:55 AM

All active links contained in this email were disabled. Please verify the identity of the sender, and confirm the authenticity of all links contained within the message prior to copying and pasting the address to a Web browser.

Writing to acknowledge receipt of Major General Hronek's letter dated 8/6/21. The Billings PD anticipates no issues with the proposed project with the expectation of a slight increase in traffic on drill days.



Rich St. John
Chief of Police
Billings Police Department
stjohnr@billingsmt.gov < Caution-
mailto:stjohnr@billingsmt.gov >

billingsmt.gov < Caution-
<https://www.ci.billings.mt.us> >

P.O. Box 1554 • Billings, MT 59103
P 406.657.8472 F 406.657.8417

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Billings
PUBLIC
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August 20, 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

2251 Belknap Ave
Billings, MT 59101

Montana Army National Guard
JFHQ-MT
Attn: Environmental Office
1956 Mt. Majo Street, P.O. Box 4789
Fort Harrison, MT 59636-4789

Dear Ms. Myers,

This letter is in regard to requested information on possible environmental issues at the proposed facility at 2121 Hangar Drive. To our divisions knowledge there is no environmental issues at this site. However, there are water resources we want you to be aware of and future construction in the area.

Billings Logan International Airport has a storm water system which connects to an onsite collection pond and drains into Alkali Creek. Alkali Creek does eventually discharge to the Yellowstone River, which is considered an "impaired" water body. Please note that storm water does not receive treatment before discharging to the Yellowstone River.

A new commercial subdivision will be starting construction for Yellowstone Landing and Chinook Warehouse, just south of the proposed facility. Access to the facility may be impacted due to construction work on Hangar Drive. We have already received a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for this commercial subdivision noting installation of storm water utilities and a storm water detention pond on site at this area.

Please call or email if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Boris Krizek
Environmental Engineer
krizekb@billingsmt.gov

From: [Martin, Jacob](#)
To: [Myers, Rebekah L NFG NG MTARNG \(USA\)](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Montana Army National Guard's Proposed Billings Limited Army Aviation Support Facility
Date: Thursday, August 19, 2021 2:05:14 PM

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Dear Ms. Meyers:

Thank you for your August 6, 2021, letter, requesting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) comment on the proposed leasing and use of existing hangar space in Billings, Yellowstone County, Montana. The proposed project would involve use and maintenance of up to 6 helicopters. New facilities would not be constructed and existing facilities would not be modified.

The USFWS reviewed your letter. Based on the information provided, we have no comments regarding federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species or other trust species. Additional information regarding listed species that may occur within the project footprint may be obtained using the IPaC project-planning tool, which streamlines the USFWS environmental review process at [Caution-https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/](https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/) < Caution-<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/> > .

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions or comments about this correspondence, please contact me via reply email or at the address or phone numbers, below.

Sincerely,

Jacob M. (Jake) Martin
Assistant Field Supervisor
Montana Ecological Services Office
585 Shephard Way, Suite 1
Helena, Montana 59601
(406) 422-8524 (cell, preferred, I'm teleworking)
(406) 430-9007 (office)
jacob_martin@fws.gov

Yellowstone County



COMMISSIONERS
(406) 256-2701
(406) 256-2777 (FAX)

P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107-5000
commission@co.yellowstone.mt.gov

Montana Air National Guard
JFHQ-MT
Attn: Environmental Office
1956 Mt. Majo Street
PO Box 4789
Fort Harrison, MT 59636-4789

rebekah.l.meyers2.nfg@mail.mil

August 17, 2021

J. Peter Hronek
Major General, Montana National Guard

Thank you for your letter of August 6, 2021 requesting information relating to an Environmental Assessment of the Montana Army National Guard's proposed Billings Limited Army Aviation Support Facility.

We are not aware of any potential environmental concerns or issues in the proposed area. We are not aware of any threatened or endangered species within a one-mile radius of the proposed area. There are no parks, nature preserves, conservation areas or other special wildlife issues. We are also not aware of any natural resource issues or concerns.

The area is near the Billings Airport and has normal traffic volumes for such. We are not aware of air quality concerns, or any other additional environmental concerns or issues.

Thank you for your consideration of this area, for a Limited Army Aviation Support Facility. Should you need any additional information – or have further questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Donald W. Jones, Yellowstone County Commissioner

Denis Pitman, Yellowstone County Commissioner

John Ostlund, Yellowstone County Commissioner